



Supervisor

Mark Ridley-Thomas

Los Angeles County • Second District

Hiring Local Workers for Local Projects

Frequently Asked Questions

July 2011

On October 19, 2010, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved a motion by Supervisor Ridley-Thomas to implement a Local Worker Hiring Program for the MLK Inpatient Tower and MLK Multi-service Ambulatory Care Center (MACC) construction projects, including a Small Business Enterprise Program for both projects.

On April 26, 2011, the Board approved a Ridley-Thomas motion to enact a Project Labor Agreement (PLA) for the MLK MACC project. This unprecedented agreement will create thousands of local jobs and guarantee the effective enactment of the project's Local Worker Hiring policy.

Together, the local worker hire, small business enterprise and project labor agreement programs present an opportunity to use the County's investment in public works as a catalyst for local job creation and revenue generation.



1. What is a local worker hiring program?

A Local Worker Hire Policy requires that local workers perform at least 30% of the total construction labor hours and disadvantaged local Workers perform at least 10% of total construction labor hours. (The 10% disadvantaged worker hours are part of the 30% Local Worker requirement).

2. What is a qualified local worker?

Under the approved policy, qualified local workers are those who reside within a five-mile radius of the project or who reside in zip codes in the County of Los Angeles where the unemployment rate exceeds 150% of the County's average unemployment rate. In summary, the local hire policy provides County residents who reside within any of 149 zip codes to qualify for the hiring preference, and ensures that local residents benefit from the County's investment in public works.

3. What is a disadvantaged worker?

A disadvantaged local worker is a qualified local worker who lives in poverty, has no high school diploma or GED, possesses a history of incarceration, has experienced protracted unemployment, is a current recipient of social services benefits, is homeless, or is a single custodial parent.

4. What if I am a qualified worker, but do not live within the five mile radius of the job?

Skilled workers living anywhere within the County can still qualify for construction jobs with local worker hire requirements:

- Any resident who lives in zip codes in the County of Los Angeles where the unemployment rate exceeds 150% of the County's average unemployment rate qualifies as a "local worker;"
- The 10% "disadvantaged worker" set aside is also available to any County resident, regardless of where they live;
- Finally, the local worker hire policy only sets a preference for 30% of the labor hours; any qualified County resident could still be eligible for the remaining 70% of the labor hours.

5. What is a Project Labor Agreement?

A project labor agreement is an agreement negotiated between the project owner (or public agency) and various trade unions. It provides the means to implement the local worker policy by adding flexibility to "first in, first out" dispatch rules, making it possible to hire the targeted disadvantaged and local workers. The project labor agreement opens apprenticeship programs to local and disadvantaged workers, enabling them to advance.

6. What are the advantages of Project Labor Agreements?

Project labor agreements have many economic advantages. Many studies confirm direct and indirect savings result from project labor agreements as a result of increased efficiency. They standardize workplace conditions and pre-determine wages. They help eliminate work stoppages and reduce the likelihood of cost overruns. They have been shown to lead increased productivity from higher-skilled workers trained through apprenticeship programs. Indeed, local worker hiring programs with project labor agreements have enabled communities, which have never before had access to construction careers, to enter union apprenticeship programs which provide lifelong skills. Finally, project labor agreements enable public entities to really target and hire disadvantaged workers.

7. How does this policy encourage small business enterprise?

The local hire policy encourages small business enterprise at the MLK inpatient tower and MACC construction projects by requiring the selected builders to have small business enterprise participation throughout the life of project.

8. Where do I learn more about job opportunities at the MLK Medical Center?

For information on employment opportunities at the MLK Medical Center, please visit www.ridley-thomas.lacounty.gov/mlk or www.hp-mlk.org or call Veronica Soto with the Department of Public Works at 626-300-2322.